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INFO RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0006  
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 0007  
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RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0001  
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 0002

UNCLAS LUXEMBOURG 000017

SIPDIS  
DEPT FOR HAITI EARTHQUAKE TASK FORCE  
USAID/W FOR DCHA/OFDA  
DEPT FOR EUR/WE - BELON  
DEPT FOR EUR/PPD - PIPKIN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [KDEM](#) [EAID](#) [PHUM](#) [OIIP](#) [LU](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: TFHA01: LUXEMBOURG PRESS FOCUSED ON OWN EFFORTS, POSITIVE  
U.S. COVERAGE

REF: LUXEMBOURG 11; STATE 5277

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: Press reporting on U.S. efforts in Haiti has been overwhelmingly - and nearly exclusively - positive. The one exception Post has noted is a letter to the editor that ran in weekly paper Le Jeudi, entitled "A Military-Humanitarian Invasion" and penned by an unknown entity. Luxembourg's own contributions to Haiti have dominated press coverage, focusing on their own boots (and paws) on the ground and euros in the pipeline. In the last couple of days, local press coverage has homed in on the feel-good adoption story, running full page spreads of the fourteen Haitian orphans arriving in Luxembourg to meet their new families. END SUMMARY

¶2. (U) The Grand Duchy responded to the earthquake in Haiti in lightning speed, sending a 17-man, 7-dog search and rescue team to the devastated country within 48 hours. The press highlighted the team's equally rapid return to Luxembourg, even if the hasty departure appears to have been driven mostly by its ride (the Belgian Army's air transport) leaving. Speculation that the team left Haiti due to poor security and lack of force protection played briefly in the press (ref a), but does not appear to have any staying power. Even if it had, the GoL deftly augmented its pledge of 700,000 euros to 1.2 million euros, returning the focus to the humanitarian assistance.

¶3. (U) When the quake struck, Post learned that the only reports of Luxembourg citizens on the ground in Haiti were of two families traveling with the Red Cross to finalize adoptions. When the families returned to Luxembourg with the search and rescue mission without the children, there was noticeable disappointment. However, as one hundred Haitian children prepared to leave their homeland for the Netherlands and Luxembourg, the press seized on the story - making front pages across the country. The arrival of fourteen children in Luxembourg on Thursday (21 January) received universal coverage in the following day's press, including, in some cases, full page spreads and group photographs of the children with their new families.

¶4. (U) The single critical article of U.S. activities in Haiti appeared in a letter to the editor, published Thursday (21 January) in the weekly paper Le Jeudi. The author, unknown to the local PD staff, is an Italian philosopher and journalist named Daniel Salvatore Schiffer. Salvatore's letter is subtitled, "Is the U.S. taking advantage of the tragedy to

expropriate (difficult translation; original: s'approprier) Haiti?" The tone of the letter is light on facts and heavy on insinuation, claiming 10,000 American troops were immediately deployed to the island not to rescue the wounded and starving population, but instead to take over the airport. Salvatore also criticizes Secretary Clinton's message upon arrival in Port-au-Prince. By saying to the world that "Today, tomorrow and in the future America will stand alongside Haiti," Salvatore contends that the United States military is preparing for a long-term occupation in Haiti. Finally, Salvatore contends that the U.S.'s objectives are not humanitarian at all, but rather to reduce European influence in the Caribbean and to better position its military against "long-term enemy Cuba" and Venezuela, a precursor to a "Yankee invasion."

15. (SBU) Le Jeudi is the only 100% French weekly in Luxembourg. In its ten years of existence, it has generated a significant readership. Its tendencies tend to skew to the left of center, and its track record is one of heavy criticism of the Bush Administration, which has tempered significantly over the Obama Administration's first year. The paper devotes significant percentage of its print space to opinion pieces and letters to the editor, often printing pieces from well-known former politicians and other luminaries. The fact that this piece was written by a virtual unknown (our Google search revealed he is not resident in Luxembourg) takes away from its credibility. Post recommends against responding at this point. Le Jeudi is known for allowing "he said, she said" arguments to play out in its pages over periods of time. This story is literally the only negative article Post has observed, and the writer is an unknown. The paper is a weekly

- the story will likely be forgotten by next week. If not, and it appears the letter gains traction or stimulates debate, Post is prepared to take the appropriate response to correct the record.

16. (U) COMMENT: Ambassador Stroum presents her credentials to the Grand Duke on 28 January, so she cannot make a direct response to the media at this point. However, at events attended by other Mission personnel, Post has observed a positive buzz within the community about U.S. leadership in Haiti. Unlike other issues where the U.S. garners heaps of attention (either wanted or unwanted), it appears Luxembourg is pleased to appear like-minded with the United States in this purely human interest story. At present, Post is pleased with the Luxembourg public and media perception of the U.S. efforts in Haiti.

17. Minimize considered.  
Stroum